

Listing of All Claims Including Current Amendments

1. (Currently amended) An endoscopic medical instrument, ~~in particular an endoscopic instrument, with~~ comprising:
_____ an instrument shaft;
_____ a tool positioned on ~~the~~ a distal end of the instrument shaft; and
_____ a handle; and
_____ a coupling element securing the handle on the instrument shaft, ~~which can be secured for storage on the instrument shaft by means of a coupling element in an axial extension of the instrument shaft, wherein the handle can be secured on the instrument shaft so that it~~ the handle can be moved by at least three degrees of freedom with respect to the instrument shaft.
2. (Previously Presented) A medical instrument as in claim 1, wherein the coupling element is configured as a component that at least partially surrounds the instrument shaft and can be clamped together with the instrument shaft.
3. (Currently amended) A medical instrument as in claim 1, wherein ~~the~~ a distal end of the handle is configured as a tensioning device to receive the coupling element.
4. (Previously Presented) A medical instrument as in claim 3, wherein a pressure force can be exerted on the coupling element by the tensioning device in such a way that the coupling element at least partially surrounds the instrument shaft while clamping said instrument shaft.
5. (Previously Presented) A medical instrument as in claim 4, wherein the coupling element is configured as an essentially spherical component equipped with a penetra-

tion bore hole for the instrument shaft and the tensioning device of the handle is configured as a bearing for rotatable storage of the coupling element.

6. (Previously Presented) A medical instrument as in claim 5, wherein the coupling element configured as a spherical component has, at least one side, an aperture running from the outer perimeter to the penetration bore hole and configured in the axial direction of the instrument shaft.

7. (Previously Presented) A medical instrument as in claim 5, wherein the spherical coupling element consists of at least two spherical segments divided in the axial direction of the instrument shaft.

8. (Currently Amended) A medical instrument as in claim 7, wherein the coupling element consists of a compressible material, especially including a rubber or plastic material.

9. (Currently Amended) A medical instrument as in claim 7, wherein the coupling element consists of a non-compressible material, ~~in particular~~ including a hard synthetic or metallic material.

10. (Previously Presented) A medical instrument as claim 9, wherein the handle has two handgrips on the proximal side, so that at least one handgrip is positioned so that it can pivot around a swivel axis with respect to the other handgrip.

11. (Previously Presented) A medical instrument as in claim 10, wherein the handle can be stopped in a closed position, in which the coupling element is clamped together with the instrument shaft.

12. (Previously Presented) A medical instrument as in claim 11, wherein a stopping device is positioned on the handle to stop the handle in the closed position.

13. (Previously Presented) A medical instrument as in claim 12, wherein the stopping device is configured as a screw thread in the area of the tensioning device.

14. (Currently Amended) A medical instrument as in claim 12, wherein the stopping device is ~~configured as an~~ eccentric lock stopping device mounted in the area of the tensioning device.

15. (Currently Amended) A medical instrument as in claim ~~14~~5, wherein ~~the rotatable storage rotation~~ of the coupling element can be restricted in the tensioning device by means of a lock pin.

16. (Currently Amended) A medical instrument as in claim 15, ~~with a tool positioned on the distal end of the instrument shaft, which tool can be activated by the handle,~~ wherein the tool can be activated by the a handgrip of the handle, ~~so that~~ and the handle and the tool are connected to one another by at least one power transmission device.

17. (Previously Presented) A medical instrument as in claim 16, wherein the at least one power transmission device is configured as a flexible power transmission element, in particular as a Bowden cable.

18. (Previously Presented) A medical instrument as in claim 16, wherein the at least one power transmission device is hydraulically powered.

19 – 22. (Cancelled)